

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 3 and 5 are amended. Claims 4 and 6 are unamended, but for amendments resulting from their dependence on claim 1. New claim 7 is added. Claims 1-7 are now pending.

Claim 1 is amended to state that the gas circulation system has an inlet from the atmosphere and an outlet to the atmosphere. Claim 2 is amended to refer to a space between the lid and the tank. Claim 3 is amended to state that the flow of gases to or from the atmosphere is prevented between the lid and the tank. Claim 5 is amended to correspond with claim 1. New claim 7 depends on claim 2 and states that one of the inlet or outlet is provided by the space between the lid and the tank. These amendments are supported by, for example, page 7, lines 5-23, of the application as filed. The Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

Claims Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected as being anticipated by Cote '593 or as being obvious over Cote '593 in view of other references. The Office Action states that Cote '593 provides an aeration system in the form of pump/blower 19 and a gas recirculation system as described in various listed parts of Cote '593. The Applicants submit that none of the cited references in Cote '593 describe a gas recirculation system as provided by Applicants' claim 1 that returns collected gases to the pump/blower 19 of Cote '593. Accordingly, the Office Action does not establish anticipation of claim 1, even prior to its amendment. Further, amended claim 1 additionally states that the gas circulation system has an exhaust to the atmosphere. In discussing claim 5, the Office Action states the "hood 12 exhaust" as a gas outlet. However, column 9, line 3-5, of Cote '593 state that hood 12 is set up to enable the recovery and destruction of the residual ozone coming from the reactor. Accordingly, lid 12 does not operate as a gas outlet, but rather a device to collect gases for their destruction.

Regarding claims 2 and 3, these claims refer to opposing embodiments, one in which there is a space between the lid and tank and another wherein the lid is sealed to the tank. The Office Action refers to the lid 12 in the Figures and column 9, lines 3-5 of Cote '593. However, since the lid 12 is shown the same way in all Figures, and column 9, lines 3-5, describe only the one lid 12, these references can not simultaneously anticipate both claims 2 and 3.

Claims 4, 5 and 6 depend on claim 1 and are not obvious for at least that reason. Regarding claim 6, the reference to the configuration of a system is a proper limitation in an apparatus claim.

For the reasons above, the Applicants submit that the claims are allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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